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THE WASHINGTON POST
31 December 1981

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Oversight

Earl Eisenhower (Letters, Dec. 22) contends that I have reversed my position on consultation between the director of Central Intelligence and Congress. He avers that I consulted with the intelligence committees on President Carter's Executive Order on Intelligence and now complain that the Reagan administration did the same.

I would respectfully suggest to Mr. Eisenhower that he forgets one important detail. I consulted with the intelligence committees of Congress on a proposed charter for intelligence that Congress was to enact as law, but not on the executive order that was to be

signed by the president. Therein lies an important distinction that is rooted in the separation of powers under our Constitution. The president manages the executive branch through executive orders and other devices; Congress passes laws and appropriates monies. In so doing, Congress may limit a president's freedom to manage. It should not try to help him manage.

I remain a strong advocate of congressional oversight of our intelligence activities.

STANSFIELD TURNER,
Former director of Central Intelligence

Washington